

**Greater Boston Breathes Better
Working Group Meeting Notes
February 11, 2005**

Attendees:

Laura Bickel: City of Boston	Holly Bogle: Harvard University
Dan Brown: EPA	Ed Burke: Burke Oil
David Cash: EOE	Lucy Edmondson: EPA
Ona Ferguson: Consensus Building Institute	Pat Field: Consensus Building Institute
Evan Freund: Consensus Building Institute	Jim Gascoigne: Charles River TMA
Alycia Gilde: NESCAUM	Steven Lanou: MIT
Steven Levy: Sprague Energy	Christine Sansevero: EPA
Gerri Scoll: MBTA	Patricio Silva: Environmental Defense
Ellen Tohn: Asthma Regional Council	Bashar Zeitoon: Environmental Defense
Dave Conroy: EPA	

Review of 2004

Patrick Field gave a brief overview of GB3 accomplishments in 2004, using the GB3 Progress To Date document from December 2004. He added that EPA awarded grants to the City of Cambridge/MIT and to Massport to retrofit diesel vehicles.

GB3 Brochure and Website update

Christine Sansevero presented a mock-up of the Shuttle Bus Fact Sheet and the GB3 brochure. The brochure could, in the future, have an insert listing all GB3 partners.

EPA will print copies of the brochure and provide copies to GB3 members to distribute. GB3 members stated that they would like a printable version of the brochure on standard paper size so that they can print it out themselves, as well as access to a digital version of the current brochure that they can take to a printer.

The next set of outreach materials could include fact sheets for colleges and universities as well as the construction industry.

The GB3 website is now available at: <http://www.epa.gov/ne/eco/gb3>. The website is relatively simple, but can be expanded to host new information about GB3.

Next Steps:

- EPA will check with their graphics department about making an easily printable brochure and continue to expand the GB3 website.

Discussion of Tasks for 2005

Patrick Field started a discussion of possible action for GB3 in 2005. He read through a list of ideas, from the document “GB3 Proposed Ideas for 2005.”

Thoughts and questions from the group:

- GB3 should try to increase its partners, especially corporate partners.
- Somerville, which is heavily congested and has air pollution problems, could be a good place to do a municipal workshop, as could Allston and Cambridge.
- How can GB3 use the good example of the Central Artery Project to promote model specifications for retrofits?
- Should there be criteria for becoming a GB3 partner? Should GB3 set up a recognition program for those partners who are taking innovative action?

IDEAS OF POTENTIAL ACTION FOR 2005

Products Vendor Fair and Conference

David Cash suggested that GB3 might want to participate in the “Massachusetts Annual Buy Recycled and Environmentally Preferable Products Vendor Fair and Conference: Sustainability Through Green Purchasing” in Worcester in October. The fair brings municipal purchasers together, and has in the past included alternative fuel fleets. David suggested that GB3 might want to organize a section on clean transportation or host workshops on school bus retrofits or incorporating retrofits into construction contract language. Ed Burke noted that the fair is very well attended, with many vendors. Questions were raised about whether the diversity of vendors could take away from the transportation focus of GB3, and about whether it makes sense for GB3 to target purchasers or others who have the authority to make the purchasing decisions.

Next Step: Unclear. No volunteers yet.

Conference: Greater Boston Air Quality, Lessons and Practices

David Cash may be on the steering committee the Boston Public Health Commission’s Greater Boston Air Quality, Lessons and Practices Conference, to be held in April 2005. The organizers want to bring academics, government, community leaders, EPA, and

others together to find coordinated ways to move forward. It may make sense for GB3 to participate in this conference.

Next Step: David Cash can take the lead on this project.

Working with Universities

Ellen Tohn suggested that universities are a particularly promising area for GB3 because (a) people at the November Universities workshop were enthusiastic about the presentations, (b) universities are doing a lot of construction right now (Harvard could retrofit construction vehicles in Allston, Northeastern could retrofit construction vehicles used in dorm construction), (c) individual actors are empowered to make changes within the universities, and (d) universities own and manage their own fleets of vehicles. ARC wants to work with universities. Holly Bogle noted that Harvard has just rewritten design guidelines for access (bike facilities, showers and lockers in new facilities.)

Next Step: Ellen Tohn, at the Asthma Regional Council, could commit some of her time to work with universities within the City of Boston, especially if the timeframe is one of action within the next 8 months. Holly Bogle and Gerri Scoll are willing to work with Ellen.

Convention Center

Ellen Tohn mentioned that the Convention Center may have committed to the Conservation Law Foundation and others that all fleets that park at the curb must minimize their air pollution. She thinks that a GB3/Convention Center project could be a positive project.

Next Step: Unclear. No volunteers yet.

Construction Vehicles

Because construction vehicles are a significant source of pollution, there are many opportunities to make these vehicles cleaner.

Next Steps:

- The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative may be a potential source of funding for transportation-related projects. CBI and other interested Working Group members will explore this further.
- David Cash will explore the possibility of including retrofit requirements in MA Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) contracts.

Marine Engines

Ed Burke commented that marine engines don't have many pollution prevention requirements, and that GB3 initiatives could help reduce pollution in this sector. He suggested that GB3 do outreach to boat operators such as commuter, recreational, party and tugboats to encourage them to use cleaner diesel fuel (highway-grade). This would significantly reduce emissions from these boats. It should be relatively easy to convince the operators of the party boats to do this because (a) their clients want to breathe clean-smelling air, and (b) using highway-grade diesel would ensure that the companies meet diesel specifications year-round. However, since there has been very little outreach to this group before, good outreach and education to this group will be critical for success.

NESCAUM is currently doing an emissions inventory of marine vessels in the Boston area, and is beginning to develop working relationships with tugboat operators and other boat companies. In New York, NESCAUM is working on several projects to demonstrate pollution control technology on marine vessels, and is also developing an inventory of technology options for marine vessels to reduce emissions. The work NESCAUM is doing in New York could be helpful to starting a project in the Boston area to demonstrate pollution control technology in marine vessels.

Environmental Defense has been working with NESCAUM on the New York marine projects, would like to work on similar projects in Boston. Some key differences between marine operations in New York and Boston are that (a) NY has 100,000 people commuting daily, whereas Boston has approximately 5,000, and (b) there are fewer vessel types in NY. Boston has many more companies.

Gerri Scoll from the MBTA mentioned that the MBTA is very interested in getting ULSD into MBTA ferries.

Next Steps:

- Fuel providers can go directly to the operators of the party boats to promote higher-grade diesel fuel.
- Convene a small group (even if only for one meeting) to determine what opportunities exist for projects to reduce emissions from marine vessels in the Boston area. This group would include Environmental Defense, NESCAUM, MassPort, Sprague Energy, Burke Oil, and MBTA. The group will look into the details of the work underway in New York and consider how it might apply to Boston. It can then make a decision about what sort of marine project GB3 can pursue.

ULSD Massachusetts Tax

Ed Burke brought up one of the obstacles to expanding the use of cleaner highway diesel fuel to non-road applications.

Non Road fuel is dyed red to distinguish it from highway diesel fuel. Non-road fuel is not taxed, where as highway diesel fuel is taxed. (The tax supports maintenance of the highways and roads). The highway diesel tax starts at the terminal and is passed to the distributors/retailers and ultimately paid by the user. As a result, people who want to use low sulfur highway diesel for non-road, tax-exempt use, generally need to purchase the taxed highway fuel and seek a tax rebate.

Since the tax on highway diesel fuel is relatively high (about 21 cents per gallon), and it can be challenging to get the rebate, many companies are reluctant to use cleaner highway diesel fuel in off road applications. It is likely that more construction companies would use ULSD if the Massachusetts State Tax law were organized differently, or if the rebate system were simpler.

Next step: Ed Burke and David Cash will explore the state tax law and potential options for removing the obstacle created by the tax.

Locomotive Engines

Like marine engines, locomotive engines have fewer pollution controls than on-road vehicles, and produce high emissions. The MBTA is currently doing a pilot project to identify effective technologies for reducing particulate matter. They have upgraded 12 locomotives voluntarily. They are now using low sulfur diesel fuel (highway diesel) in all the commuter trains. There are new, smaller auxiliary power units (APUs) in Massachusetts that keep engine parts warm and allow trains to stop idling. Cost recovery for these units is about two years.

Freight trains that come through Allston are a big source of air pollution. GE has a “green goat” (the engine used in railroad stations, usually a retired engine), which weighs less and is less polluting than other goats. However, GE hasn’t gotten many orders for this engine.

In California, a consortium of regulatory agencies, private companies, CARB and others is working to identify effective strategies for reducing pollution from locomotives.

NESCAUM is currently working with railroad companies that operate in New Haven to reduce emissions from locomotives in that city. The results of this work could be helpful to GB3.

Next Steps:

- GB3 should identify regional and national railroads that come into Boston and find out if any of them are already working to reduce emissions from their operations.
- If there is strong interest in pursuing an effort to reduce locomotive emissions, we should invite one or more of the railroad companies to work with GB3 on a project.

- NESCAUM would be interested in working with railroad companies operating in the Boston area, using the New Haven model.
- Gerri Scoll could ask MBTA staff members to share what they have learned in retrofitting their locomotives.

Truck Idling Prevention

Technology is on the market that can provide energy/heat to truck cabs, allowing long haul truck drivers to shut down their engines while they are not traveling. There are three basic types of technology: (a) the truck drives up to a unit at a truck stop that is equipped with a window unit that transmits the necessary energy, heat and other services to the cab (eg IdleAire Technologies), (b) a unit is installed on a truck that allows it to plug into an electrical outlet for powering basic services, similar to that used by RVs. (c) the truck itself is equipped with a small, stand alone generator, sometimes called an auxiliary power unit (eg Pony Pack). EOEA is trying to get funding for new technology for truck stops.

Next Step: Anyone interested in these should contact David Cash.

Municipal or State Laws for Clean Specs

One way to promote retrofits among construction companies while also bringing cleaner air to communities is to ask local municipalities and/or the State to include retrofit requirements and cleaner fuels in construction contracts. In December 2003, the New York City Council passed NYC Local Law 77. Local Law 77 requires retrofits and the use of ultra low sulfur diesel fuel in vehicles above a certain size. The law applies to all vehicles under contract with the City of New York, as well as vehicles owned or leased by the City. This law passed as a result of an advocacy partnership among a large private developer, trade organizations, Environmental Defense, NESCAUM and others. The success of this bill has led others to introduce new bills extending these requirements to other types of vehicles. The law has been hard to enforce in NY.

The City of Boston would rather do outreach and education than pass requirements. Since cities in the Boston area are relatively small (compared with New York), there is concern that if one city enacts such legislation, it risks losing regional construction companies' contracts since companies could go to a neighboring city that does not have such requirements.

Environmental Defense has filed a version of Local Law 77 in the state legislature in Massachusetts, with Alice Wolfe (Cambridge) as the sponsor. So as not to create a disincentive for contractors to bid on a given project in a "strict" municipality, the proposed bill covers all of Massachusetts at this point. Environmental Defense is working with developers and trade association representatives.

Next Steps:

- Determine if anyone in GB3 has a connection with any large private developers.
- Host a workshop/breakfast for developers and legislators to educate them about the opportunities for retrofits and cleaner fuels, and to discuss some of the local examples in which it is already working (Central Artery, MBTA/MHD construction projects) Environmental Defense and Sprague Energy are both interested in working on this.
- Based on the outcome of the breakfast, consider forming a subgroup to work further on legislation
- CBI will meet with staff in the Somerville Planning Department to discuss the idea of becoming a “model city” for GB3, by adopting a suite of clean transportation measures.
- Consider working with Medford and Cambridge with Somerville as three model GB3 partner municipalities.
- CBI will try to get the right contract language for off-road construction with DCAM, the state construction agency. CBI will invite David Cash to participate.
- CBI will circulate the bill submitted by Environmental Defense

Discussions of Incentives for Taking Action

What kind of *incentive* programs can GB3 or EPA create to get organizations to sign up for voluntary action? The ideal would be to have students, faculty, and clients at a particular university or organization require the companies they hire to participate in some sort of clean transportation program (eg cleaner fuels, retrofits, and the like). Organizations participating in GB3 could help make this happen by adopting such policies for those that do business with them, and by educating neighborhood associations and encouraging them to make similar request to the companies that supply them.

New GB3 Partners

We would like to continue to increase the participation of private companies in GB3. Likely prospects are companies with leaders who want to raise their profile as a good corporate citizen, community member, or environmental leader. GB3 can attract participants by being a “one stop shop” for ideas and programs about voluntary air pollution reduction. GB3 can suggest voluntary action they can take to increase their profile. The idea is to pitch the notion that “we can help you, learn what is available.”

Next Step:

- CBI and EPA will develop a quick summary of GB3 to use when doing the GB3 sales pitch.
- CBI will apply for funding from wealthy regional companies and organizations.
- A few Working Group members, including Steven Levy and Gerri Scoll, expressed interest in getting more private companies involved in GB3.

Future Home for GB3

At the end of 2005, the EPA seed funding for GB3 will run out. It is necessary to find another home for GB3 to make it sustainable over the long term. This will be an important project for the next several months. We also discussed potential sources of funding for GB3 over time. Initial suggestions included Bank of America and other banks, and research hospitals.

Next Steps:

- GB3 members let CBI know if you have any contacts with corporations that might want to help fund this search or house GB3 in the future.
- Ed Burke suggested inviting a trade group to join GB3, maybe the Environmental Business Council.
- CBI will develop a short summary of what GB3 is looking for 2005 and beyond.
- CBI and EPA convene a subgroup on the sustainability of GB3, including Steven Lanou, Patricio Silva, Ellen Tohn, Steven Levy, and Alycia Gilde.

Concluding Remarks, Action Items and Miscellaneous Information

Gerri Scoll asked what is the Boston Consortium doing about Risk Management. She is interested in working with Harvard as a huge potential source.

Gerri Scoll also asked if there is one big list or database that is kept of requirements for retrofits? No one at the meeting knew of such a list.

Ed Burke stated that since federal law will require ULSD (for on road vehicles) in June 2006, it makes sense for GB3 to focus on making other types of changes. Christine Sansevero responded that the regulations will require on-road vehicles to use ULSD (2006) and non-road vehicles to use highway grade fuel (2007). An additional, non regulatory, step that GB3 could promote is the use of ULSD in non-road vehicles, including marine vessels.

Ellen Tohn would like EPA and CBI to make matrix of these projects and send it to the Working Group to help with prioritizing 2005 action. CBI and EPA will develop this matrix, task action items to people, and check back in 4-5 months to evaluate progress.